

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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R 022026Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4801
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 3012

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PEPR, PINS, DR
SUBJECT: A GLIPSE INTO THE FUTURE

REF: SANTO DOMINGO 2871

1. IT MAY BE TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT INTERNAL STRAINS,
MUCH LESS THE REOPENING OF OLD DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PRD,
WHICH UP TO THIS POINT HAS IMPRESSIVELY MAINTAINED ITSELF
AS A DISCIPLINED, WELL-ORGANIZED AND UNITED POLITICAL
FORCE WHICH WILL TAKE UP THE REINS OF POWER HERE IN AUGUST 16.
BUT THE SIGNS ARE ALREADY BECOMING APPARENT THAT THE
NATURAL PULL AND HAUL OF INTRA-MURAL POLITICS WILL TEST
THE PARTY'S UNITY, ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE.

2. THIS IS BECAUSE ANTONIO GUZMAN, THE 67-YEAR-OLD
PARTY WAR-HORSE WHO UPSET PRESIDENT BALAGUER IN THE MAY
16 ELECTION, WILL BE A ONE-TERM PRESIDENT; WHO WILL BE
THE PRD CANDIDATE FOUR YEARS HENCE IN THE 1982 ELECTION
IS ALREADY A MATTER OF SOME DISCUSSION AMONG PARTY
LEADERS. GUZMAN HIMSELF HAS NOT ANNOUNCED HE WILL
SEEK TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION TO PREVENT THE RE-
ELECTION OF A SITTING PRESIDENT, BUT HE SAYS PRI-
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VATELY THIS IS HIS INTENTION IN THE NEXT YEAR OR TWO.
TO TAKE SUCH ACTION NOW, HE SAYS, WOULD BE TO WEAKEN
HIS AUTHORITY AND, EVEN BEFORE HE TAKES OFFICE, MAKE
A LAME DUCK OF HIMSELF.

3. THE DUEL FOR FIRST PLACE ON THE PRD TICKET IN 1982,
MAD AS THAT MAY SEEM IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, IS

ALREADY UNDERWAY BETWEEN VP-ELECT JACOBO MAJLUTA AND SENATOR-ELECT SALVADOR JORGE BLANCO, ERSTWHILE CONTESTANT FOR THE PARTY NOMINATION GUZMAN WON LAST NOVEMBER AND NOW PROBABLY THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE. BOTH MAJLUTA AND JORGE BLANCO ALREADY ARE BEGINNING TO ALIGN THEIR FORCES FOR CONTROL OF THE POWERFUL PRD POLITICAL MACHINERY, A QUESTION THAT WILL BE DECIDED AT ITS NEXT CONVENTION SOMETIME THIS FALL. SOME HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THEIR COMPETITION IS IN ORDER.

4. MAJLUTA WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE PRD AT THE PARTY'S 1976 CONVENTION. HE SET HIS PARTY PRESIDENCY ASIDE WHEN AT THE PARTY'S 1977 CONVENTION HE WAS NOMINATE VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED ELECTION. AT THAT TIME, TO HELP MAINTAIN PARTY UNITY, JORGE BLANCO WAS NAMED PRD PRESIDENT AD INTERIM; EVER SINCE THEN HE HAS APPEARED DETERMINED TO HOLD ON TO THE PARTY'S MACHINERY, TO POSITION HIMSELF FOR 1982. (EARLIER IN THIS YEAR'S CAMPAIGN, HE INDICATED PRIVATELY THAT HE BELIEVED GUZMAN WOULD LOSE TO BALAGUER, AN EVENTUALITY THAT WOULD ALSO FINISH OFF MAJLUTA.) AS THINGS HAVE TURNED OUT, HOWEVER, JORGE BLANCO REMAINS IN THE CATBIRD SEAT FOR THE PRD PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION FOUR YEARS FROM NOW. BUT THIS DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE AMBITIONS OF THE DYNAMIC, 41-YEAR-OLD MAJLUTA.

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5. FOR HIS PART, MAJLUTA SAYS HE IS PREPARED TO BE VICE-PRESIDENT ONLY AND ADDS THAT HE WILL KEEP HIS HANDS OFF THE PARTY MACHINERY--BUT ONLY IF JORGE BLANCO AGREES TO DO THE SAME, I.E., TAKE HIS SEAT AS SENATOR FROM THE NATIONAL DISTRICT AND LEAVE THE PARTY PRESIDENCY IN THE HANDS OF A "NEUTRAL" PARTY LEADER. WHAT MAJLUTA WANTS IS A "GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT" WITH JORGE BLANCO THAT THEY CAN HAVE AN EVEN FACE-OFF IN THE FALL FOR A CLEAN DEMOCRATIC DECISION AS TO WHO THE PARTY PRESIDENT-ELECT IS TO BE. ACTUALLY, MAJLUTA THINGS THE FACE-OFF HAS BEGUN ALREADY BUT WILL NOT BE DECIDED UNTIL THE NEXT PARTY CONVENTION, PROBABLY IN NOVEMBER.

6. MEANWHILE, ANTONIO GUZMAN HAS TO ORGANIZE HIS GOVERNMENT. HIS "NATIONAL UNITY" APPROACH HAS SPARKED MUCH INTEREST AMONG YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND TECHNOCRATS, NOT PARTY MEMBERS OR PARTICULARLY IDENTIFIED AS SYMPATHIZERS, BUT PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY ARE EAGER TO SERVE THE COUNTRY. SALVADOR JORGE BLANCO IS A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE IDEA AND MAINTAINS (AS CURRENT PRD PRESIDENT A.I.) THAT THERE WILL BE A COMPLETE

SEPARATION OF THE PARTY FROM THE GOVERNMENT. OF COURSE, THE PARTY MACHINERY WILL SUPPORT THE GUZMAN PROGRAMS, BUT JORGE BLANCO AND ANTONIO GUZMAN STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT COMMINGLING PARTY AND GOVERNMENT CADRES IS THE SUREST WAY TO CORRUPTION; THE HIGH LEVEL OF CORRUPTION IN THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS A GLARING EXAMPLE OF THIS. PARTY SECGEN PENA GOMEZ, WHO HAS TOLD US THAT A MAJORITY OF THE MEMBERS OF GUZMAN'S CABINET WILL COME FROM OUTSIDE PARTY RANKS, AGREES WITH THIS THESIS; LIKE GUZMAN, PENA SAYS THAT WHICH REPLACES BALAGUER WILL NOT RPT NOT BE A PRD GOVERNMENT.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 3012

7. BUT MAJLUTA HAS SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT THIS. HAVING A MASS FOLLOWING OF HIS OWN, HE FEELS THE NEED TO BRING HIS PEOPLE OUT OF THE DESERT. HE IS WILLING TO ACCEPT SOME "INDEPENDENTS" IN THE GOVERNMENT, BUT THE CRUCIAL SUBSTRATA OF GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES,

THAT WHICH ACTUALLY INFLUENCES OR CONTROLS POLICIES AND ACTIONS, MUST BE MANNED BY PROVEN PRD LOYALISTS. "WE'VE STARVED OUR PEOPLE TOO LONG TO ASK THEM, NOW, TO ACCEPT ANOTHER YEAR OR TWO WITHOUT THE BENEFITS OF POLITICAL POWER," SAY HE.

8. THESE DIFFERENCES IN BASIC APPROACH SHOULD PROVE SOLUBLE, BUT THEY WILL ADD TO THE HEADACHES GUZMAN WILL HAVE WHEN HE DOES TAKE OFFICE. HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES FULLY EXPECT THE REFORMISTAS TO LOOT THE TREASURY BEFORE LEAVING NEXT AUGUST; THE INCOMING ADMINISTRATION WILL HAVE AN ADDITIONAL \$30 MILLION A YEAR IN INCREASED POLICE AND MILITARY SALARIES (BALAGUER LAS WEEK APPROVED \$1,200 AND \$600 ANNUAL PAY INCREASES FOR OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN, RESPECTIVELY); IT FACES A SHORTFALL

OF ANOTHER \$30 MILLION IN EXPORT TAXES ON COFFEE AND COCOA,
WHICH WERE ELIMINATED IN ANOTHER ELECTORAL PLY BY BALAGUER RECENTLY;
IT WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH AN UNPAID OR UNDERPAID BUREAUCRACY,
WHICH ALREADY IS STRAPPED; FOREIGN DEBTS OF UNKNOWN MAGNITUDE,
AND MANY OTHER PROBLEMS. AND THEN THERE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO VOTED
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NOT FOR THE PRD BUT FOR "CHANGE," AND THEY MAY WANT CHANGE NOW.

9. GUZMAN ALSO MUST FACE THE PROBLEM OF WHAT TO DO ABOUT
PENA GOMEZ. ACTUALLY, THIS IS A TWO SIDED PROBLEM: WHAT PEN A DOES
BETWEEN NOW AND INAUGURATION, AND WHAT HIS ROLE IS TO BE AFTERWARD.
PEN A HAS INDICATED HIS ONLY CURRENT TRAVEL PLANS ARE FOR A JULY
TRIP TO A CONFERENCE IN COSTA RICA (THE APT THEME: "THE TRANS-
FORMATION FROM CAUDILLISMO TO DEMOCRACY"), BUT OTHERWISE,
HE BELIEVES HE MAY STAY HERE UNTIL AFTER INAUGURATION, WHEN HE
WILL THEN GO ABROAD. GUZMAN, OF COURSE, WOULD LIKE HIM GONE NOW
AND SOME OF PEN A'S CLOSER FRIENDS ARE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WAYS
OF ARRANGING THIS.

10. ONE THING NO PRD LEADER BELIEVES IS A SOLUTION OF THE
"PEN A PROBLEM," AND THAT IS FOR HIM TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES.
THAT WOULD ONLY HEIGHTEN PUBLIC ATTENTION TO THE CLOSE TIES
BETWEEN THE US AND THE PRD, WHICH ARE BEING DENOUNCED DAILY BY
THE REFORMISTAS ON THE RIGHT AS "INTERVENCIONISMO," AND ON THE
LEFT, BY JUAN BOSCH AND THE COMMUNISTS, AS A WOEFUL CONFESSION OF
THE PRD'S TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON WASHINGTON. INCREASINGLY, WE
ARE CAUTIONED BY CLEAR THINKING PEOPLE IN THE PRD THAT, WHILE
THEY APPRECIATE OUR HELP UP TO THIS POINT AND LOOK FORWARD TO
MORE TANGIBLE ASSISTANCE, A US GOD-FATHER IMAGE HERE MUST BE
AVOIDED AT ALL HAZARDS.

11. ONE IDEA ON THE PEN A PROBLEM SOME ARE CONSIDERING IS THAT PEN A
COULD GO TO VENEZUELA AS GUEST OF ACCION DEMOCRATICA OR ON
SOME OTHER PRETEXT FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. THEREAFTER HE COULD TRAVEL
ABOUT EUROPE ON THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT, LINING UP
HIGH-LEVEL ATTENDANCE FOR GUZMAN'S INAUGURATION.

12. EMBASSY IS LISTENING TO THESE CONSIDERATIONS BUT NOT
PARTICIPATING IN THE DISCUSSION. WE FEEL USG HAS A GOOD POSITION
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HERE WITH THE NEXT GOVERNMENT, AND THAT WE CAN CAPITALIZE ON IT
AS OPPORTUNITIES OFFER. ASSUME WE WILL WISH TO RESPOND AS
POSITIVELY AS POSSIBLE TO EXPRESSED NEEDS - ONCE THESE BEGIN TO
BE PRESENTED - SUBJECT TO USG EVALUATION OF THOSE NEEDS, OF ITS

OWN INTERESTS AND CAPABILITIES AND OF PROPER TIMING.

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